



**September 2004**

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## Gillmor Washington Update

As your Representative in Congress, I am proud to represent Ohio's Fifth Congressional District here in Washington, DC.

In order to keep the citizens of the Fifth District better informed and up to date on my activities in Washington, DC and back home in Ohio, I have published this September edition of my monthly newsletter. It is my goal to provide you with the information you need to stay informed on the issues important to Ohio. In this edition of my Monthly Update, I have focused on the important events that have taken place in the month of August and inform you of upcoming September events in the Fifth District. I hope that you will find this information beneficial. Please contact me should you have any questions or comments.

## Congressional District Work Period

This August, the House of Representatives continued its tradition of suspending business throughout the month of August to allow members the opportunity to spend more time back at home in their Congressional districts. I am always very glad to have such an opportunity to schedule week-day visits with you as the demands of my schedule in the U.S. Capitol does not typically allow me to do so.



Congressman Gillmor speaks with constituents at the August Town Hall meeting in Clyde, Ohio

This year, I was able to schedule town meetings in Fulton, Van Wert, and Sandusky counties to hear directly from you and your neighbors on the job Congress is doing for Northwest Ohio and the issues that you feel are most important to our nation.

In Archbold, I heard from many Fifth District residents that they were happy with the action the House has taken in affirming the definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman. However, understandably frustrations remain over our complicated tax code, increas-

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ing illegal immigration and fuel costs, and the inability of our U.S. Senate to pass many meaningful pieces of legislation due to their ineffective rules requiring a super majority of 60 Senators to support a vote on legislation.



Congressman Gillmor speaks with constituents at the August Town Hall meeting in Van Wert, Ohio

In Van Wert, many of your Fifth District neighbors expressed their frustration regarding rising inflation, the Senate's failure again to pass a meaningful Energy reform bill, and the rising cost of medical liability insurance. The House of Representatives has already acted to address the need for an energy policy as well as liability reform but again each has failed to be addressed through Senate action. The lack of action by the

Senate on these issues leaves us reliant on foreign energy and continues a practice in which doctors are forced to pay exorbitant malpractice insurance prices while making tough decisions on whether they can afford to continue serving our communities.

In Clyde, I heard from your neighbors directly on their fears concerning our national security. It is important that smaller communities also receive adequate funding to fully prepare their first responders to handle potential attacks. Federal funds are available through the grant process for our local firefighters and police departments and I am happy to work with local officials to assist in accessing such monies.

I am greatly indebted to your local officials who keep me abreast of the issues they are facing in our local community governments. I took advantage of our August break from session to meet with many local representatives in the district and discuss the impact of federal legislation on our communities. The actions taken in Washington at the federal level have an important impact on the Fifth District of Ohio and I value the opinions of local officials on the issues we are considering and other topics important to the communities of Ohio's Fifth District.



Congressman Gillmor speaks with elected officials in Henry County

I appreciated hearing all the comments made at our August town meetings and in my visits with local officials and other community resi-

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dents. I will keep them in mind as the House returns this month to our business in the Capitol. In fact, I always look forward to hearing from my constituents via phone, email, or letter and would strongly encourage you to contact me about the issues which are most important to you and your families. Keeping in touch with you is essential to my service as your representative in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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## Discussing the Assault Weapons Ban

As you may have already heard, a semi-automatic weapons ban, enacted by Congress in 1994, is set to expire today, Monday, September 13, 2004.

Under current law, any firearm that can be fired in fully automatic mode or in multi-round bursts are classified as "machine guns," and must be registered with the federal government. Furthermore, it is illegal to assemble a machine gun with legally or illegally obtained parts. The population of legally owned machine guns has been frozen since 1986, and they are not covered by the semi-automatic assault weapons ban. According to the U.S. Library of Congress, there are about 177,000 machine guns available in the civilian market; about 22,000 of these machine guns are owned by law enforcement agencies. According to a 1997 survey of 203,300 state and federal prisoners, who had been armed during the commission of the crimes for which they were incarcerated, fewer than 2%, used, carried, or possessed a fully automatic or semi-automatic assault weapon.

Statutes classify a rifle as a semi-automatic assault weapon, if it is able to accept a detachable magazine, and includes two or more of the following five characteristics: (1) a folding or telescoping stock; (2) a pistol grip; (3) a bayonet mount; (4) a muzzle flash suppressor or threaded barrel capable of accepting such a suppressor; or (5) a grenade launcher. There are similar definitions for pistols and shotguns that are classified as semiautomatic assault weapons.

Since the ban went into effect, many firearm manufacturers in the U.S. and abroad have modified the design of firearms, so they no longer meet the statutory definition of a semiautomatic assault weapon. It is not uncommon today to hear references to pre-ban and post-ban assault weapons, the latter having been modified and, hence, not subject to the ban. Even before the 1994 ban, the Administration of George H.W. Bush had halted the importation of some semi-automatic firearms that could be considered assault weapons and the Clinton Administration halted the importation of additional firearms, which had been modified to overcome the ban.

Opponents of the ban generally argue that the statutorily defined characteristics of a semi-automatic assault weapon are largely cosmetic, and that these weapons are potentially no more lethal than other semi-automatic firearms that are designed to accept a detachable magazine and are equal or superior in terms of ballistics and other performance characteristics. Proponents of the ban may argue that semiautomatic military-style firearms -- particularly those capable of accepting large capacity ammunition feeding devices -- have no place in the civilian gun

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stock.

At this point, I feel that it is highly unlikely that either the House or Senate will consider legislation to extend or make permanent this ban.

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## 2004 Issues Questionnaire

From the front page of my website you will find my 25-question 2004 Issues Questionnaire. Please use my website at <http://gillmor.house.gov> to complete the questionnaire and log your views on the issues which are important to you. While on my website, you can find information on press releases important to the Fifth District, services my office can provide, contact information, legislative information, and information for students. If you have not already had the opportunity, I encourage you to complete my 2004 questionnaire.



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## Focus on Health: Prescription Drug Coverage that Works!

At this time last summer, Congress was working hard to implement the first-ever Medicare Prescription Drug coverage for seniors. Today, critics continue to challenge the success of the program. As a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, I supported prescription drug coverage for seniors and the successes of the program are now clearly visible.

Criticisms of the Prescription Drug Plan are weakening in the face of its success. Recently, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) confirmed the cost of the new Medicare provisions at \$394 billion over ten years. This is the exact same figure which was supplied to Congress last year. In fact, the CBO has now reconfirmed this score three times.



Major governmental initiatives such as the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan passed last year will always come with reservations. While President Bush and Congress were delivering the first prescription drug benefit to our Nation's seniors in Medicare's history, opponents were advocating a crippling plan which would have cost the American people nearly \$1 trillion. We now have a prescription drug plan which fairly benefits all seniors and relieves the burden of healthcare on those most in need.

What is most important about the prescription drug plan is that seniors can live better lives. The plan focuses on preventative care through providing lower cost, effective medications before painful procedures and hos-

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pitalizations are necessary. The program also places control in your hands, allowing you to choose the health care plan which best suits your needs.

In an effort to immediately relieve the high cost of prescription drugs, discount cards became available in May of this year. These cards provide average savings of up to 20 percent off of name brand and up to 35 percent off of generic prescription drugs. When combined with a \$600 credit for low-income seniors, the prescription drug discount cards provide real savings to those who truly need them.

I was proud to vote for the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 and am proud of the successes of this program. I am confident that these successes will continue into the future and that the benefits to the lives of our seniors will be great.

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## The Importance of Presidential Nominating Conventions

In the past month, both the Republican and Democratic parties have gathered to complete the task of nominating a candidate for President of the United States. Some may ask about the history and use of these nominating conventions. The evolution of this process has fascinated historians for centuries and has been vital in some of the greatest elections in history.



In the early 1800's, congressional caucuses chose the presidential nominees from each party. Then in 1831, the Anti-Masons party held the first national convention with Democrats and Republicans holding their first national conventions by 1856. While the rules have changed significantly since the early conventions when the delegates battled in smoke-filled back rooms, negotiating over national platforms and presidential nominees, the process nevertheless remains important.

Today, presidential primaries allow the people of each state to select the presidential nominee of their choice. With the demands of television coverage, nominating conventions now serve as a party energizer and bring thousands of delegates and elected officials together for the purpose of developing a path to victory.



Through both the Democratic and Republican National Conventions, each party has had an opportunity to deliver their message for the future of our country to the people of America. I am glad to see the success of our con-

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ventions continue and proud to be a part of the decision-making process for the future of America.

## Focus on the Fifth: Defiance Municipal Court Receives \$1,200,000 in August Grants

The U.S. Department of Justice has approved a \$1,214,086 grant for the Defiance Municipal Court. The grant comes from the President's Family Justice Center Initiative and will assist the Defiance Municipal Court to create a focused, efficient, coordinated, and user friendly system to improve access to services for domestic violence victims and their children.



Congressman Gillmor supports many efforts to award grant money for worthy district causes. Pictured above are some of the administrators of one such program through the Defiance Municipal Court.

The goals of Defiance's program include the creation of a centralized location for onsite services; enhanced investigation and prosecution of domestic violence and stalking cases; enhanced enforcement of protection orders; development of computer tracking systems; and the continuation of the multi-county task force to exchange information and improve effectiveness. Through satellite sites in Fulton, Henry, Putnam, Van Wert, and Williams County, the Defiance Municipal Court program will provide access and safety to victims by reducing the distance in which they must travel for assistance.

This grant will improve the lives and security of domestic violence victims across the Fifth District. The pain of domestic violence victims should not be exasperated by government red tape. Through this program, over 1.2 million dollars will be directed towards assisting the speedy recovery of victims and providing for their families.

## Focus on the Fifth: Eight District Fire Departments Receive over \$553,000 in August Grants

In the past month, eight district fire departments received \$553,381 in grant money from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness.

These funds, made available by Congress, will be used to increase the effectiveness of fire fighting operations, fire fighter health and safety

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programs, new fire apparatus, EMS programs, and fire prevention and safety programs. The awards will be used towards training, equipment, wellness and fitness, and modifications to fire stations and facilities.

The eight fire departments receiving awards throughout August include:

Bettsville	\$72,219
Damascus Township	\$62,550
Deshler/Westhope	\$49,477
Gibsonburg	\$76,275
New Riegel	\$10,800
Ohio City	\$33,480
Sycamore	\$44,280
Tiffin	\$204,300



These grant monies will improve the effectiveness of firefighters in each of the eight areas and benefit citizens across the Fifth District of Ohio. Firefighters play a critical role ensuring the safety of our communities and these moneys will help to deliver the resources necessary to excel in their mission.

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## Appropriations News: Five Airports Receive over \$1,050,000 in August Grants

In the past month, five city airports across the Fifth District received \$1,053,405 in grant money from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration.

These funds, will be used to enhance overall safety and efficiency as well as improve the infrastructure of the airfield. Grant money will be directed towards various projects at the five airports which may include the installation of an automated weather observation system which provides weather data to pilots, the acquisition of snow removal equipment, the installation of precision approach path indicators, the preservation of the pavement infrastructure on the parallel taxiway, and the acquisition of land.

The five airports receiving awards throughout August include:

City of Bucyrus	\$113,565
City of Fostoria	\$300,000
Henry County	\$150,000
Putnam County	\$136,740
Williams County	\$353,100

The grant money awarded by the Department of Transportation will improve the safety and effectiveness of each of these five area airports. I was pleased to see the FAA providing relief of the prohibitive cost of the airfield improvements and assisting airfields which are important to the people and economies of the Fifth District.

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## Congressman Gillmor's September Casework Onsite Schedule

One of my goals as Congressman is to make sure that casework services are readily available to all my constituents. Unfortunately, the size of our sixteen county district makes travel to my Defiance, Tiffin, or Norwalk offices prohibitive for many. In order to ensure that my staff is accessible to all my constituents, I have scheduled casework onsites in Wood and Seneca Counties as follows:

***Thursday, September 30, 2004***

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Weston Village Hall  
13234 Main Street

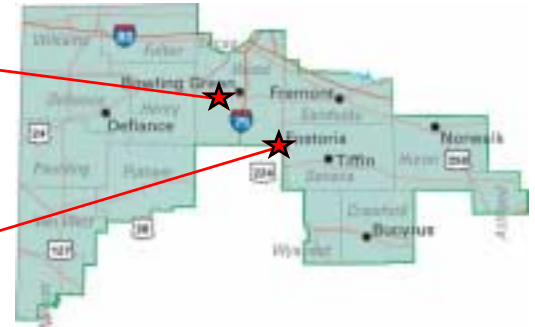
**WESTON**

***Thursday, September 30, 2004***

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Fostoria Municipal Building  
Mayor Davoli's Office  
213 South Main Street

**FOSTORIA**



If you are in the area, I encourage you to stop by and my staff will be happy to assist you with any problems you are having with the federal government.

## Contact Me

If you have any suggestions on topics you would like to see addressed in my monthly updates, require any additional information, or would like to inform me of your views on matters concerning the federal government, please contact me anytime in Washington, DC or in any of my Ohio offices.

If you wish to forward your questions or concerns via U.S. mail, please address your correspondence to one of my Ohio offices as mail sent to the Longworth House Office Building in Washington is subject to a lengthy screening process and may not reach my office in a timely manner.